

KOMU

July 16, 2008

Bill Sets Guidelines for Stroke, Heart Attack Care

SPRINGFIELD (AP) - Stroke and heart attack patients in Missouri could get faster, better help that will improve their chances for survival under a new state law. Legislation signed by Governor Blunt on Friday created a "Time Critical Diagnosis System" for stroke and a fatal type of heart attack called ST-elevation myocardial infarction. The legislation requires emergency medical services to take people with acute stroke and STEMI to a designated center of care first. That's instead of taking them to the closest facility. Doctors say incoming stroke patients will get "reperfusion therapy," or tPA, a clot-busting drug, as soon as possible. After a stroke, doctors have about three hours to try to get blood flow back to the brain.